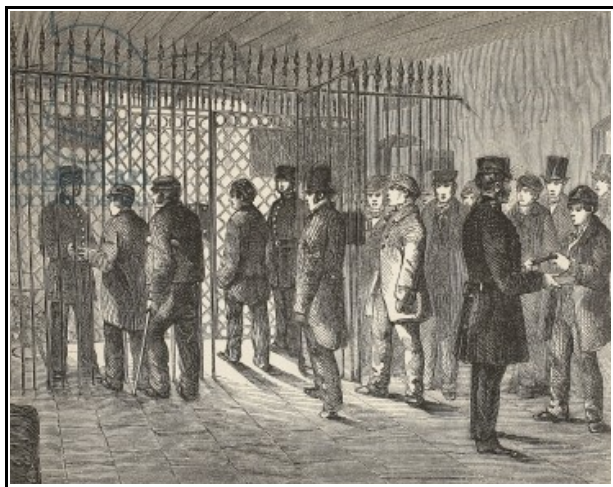


Crime and Punishment

Hankerton



Before the Swindon Bench of Magistrates Thursday 1 May 1902

Trial of Samuel James

Samuel James, a butcher, of Hankerton, Malmesbury, was summoned for exposing for sale in the Swindon Market, on April 18th, 18 pieces of meat said to be unsound, unwholesome, and unfit for human food.

Mr R Hilton, the Town Clerk, prosecuted, and said that there was a great need for the Corporation's Officers to be vigilant in such matters, as there appeared to be a tendency to regard the Market as a dumping ground for bad meat. He called Mr Bothomley, inspector of nuisances, who said that as the beef on defendant's stall appeared to him to be unsound, he had it examined by the Medical Officer and a veterinary surgeon, had it condemned by a magistrate, and then burnt.

Dr Streeten, the medical officer referred to, attended the Court and pronounced his opinion that the meat was unsound --- flabby, dark, and beginning to decompose. The beast from which it came could not have been healthy.

Mr Rayner Goddard, barrister, who defended, produced a piece of beef in Court and requested Dr Streeten's opinion upon its condition. The witness declined to answer, but Mr Goddard insisted upon a reply, saying the beef produced was a portion of the same carcass as the meat which had been seized and destroyed. The Bench allowed his contention, and Mr Streeten then admitted that the beef produced certainly did not show any great signs of decomposition, but he maintained that the animal must have been unhealthy.

Two other witnesses supported this view, but the defendant and several other witnesses said that the animal was in perfect health when it met with an accident, broke some of its legs, and had to be killed.

Mr Goddard submitted that the Corporation's officers had made a mistake, and the Bench dismissed the case, refusing, however, to entertain a demand by the defendant for compensation.

Gloucester Citizen Friday 2 May 1902